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Zimovina, E. P.

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**MIGRATION
AND THE TRANSFORMATION
OF MULTIETHNIC
POPULATION STRUCTURE
IN THE KALININGRAD
REGION
OF THE POST-SOVIET ERA**

E. Zimovina *



This paper analyses migration processes and their influence on the transformation of multiethnic population structure in the Kaliningrad region. The author uses official statistics (current statistics and census data), as well as interviews with the representatives of ethnic cultural associations as information sources. Special attention is paid to the migration features associated with different ethnic groups. The author identifies major reasons behind the incoming and outgoing movement of population. In the post-Soviet period the Kaliningrad region has experienced positive net migration. This active migration into the region has contributed to the development of “migration networks” and established a new basis for further population increase through migration. The article describes changes in the regional multiethnic population structure and identifies key factors behind them. It is concluded that migration has played the decisive role in the process of multiethnic population structure transformation in the Kaliningrad region in the post-Soviet period. The author views migration as a serious test for both the migrants and the receiving society. On the one hand, migrants have to adapt to a different national, cultural, and linguistic environment and look for the ways of successful integration into the receiving society. On the other hand, the receiving society also faces a serious transformation as a result of the changing population size and structure, the emergence of new elements in culture, rules of behaviour, and the development of new attitudes.

Key words: Kaliningrad region, population, migration, multiethnic structure, post-Soviet period

**Review of research.
Statement of the problem**

Demographic and migration processes in the post-Soviet period in the Kaliningrad region are examined in a number of papers, which provide a description of the Kaliningrad society, study the socio-

* Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University
14 a. Nevski str., Kaliningrad,
236041, Russia

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demographic situation, present a multivariate forecast of the demographic development of the region and review the specificity of migration processes based on statistical sources and sociological survey data [1—10]. However, the issues of transformation of the region's multiethnic structure under the influence of demographic and migration processes have been rarely addressed by researchers [3; 4; 11]. The questions related to creating the multinational composition of the region's population were also raised in some works of historians dedicated to the Soviet period [12; 13]. The study aims at identifying the role of migration in the transformation of the region's multiethnic population structure in the post-Soviet period.

Research sources

In this paper two sources different in nature and content were used. First of all, this is the official statistics, the All-Union census of 1989, the census of 2002 and 2010. [23—25], and the current statistical data published in statistical yearbooks for the last two decades [14; 26—41]. Statistical materials make it possible to answer the questions, *what* happens and *how* it happens. However, not always you can answer the question *why* it so happens with only statistical information. That is why some verbal sources were used, expert interviews with the chairmen and members of the Kaliningrad region's national and cultural associations [15—22]. Expert interview is a subjective source of information, which contains only the respondent's point of view concerning a problem. But all of the interviewees are well aware of the situation from the inside, and they confirmed both challenges and successes in the integration process in the Kaliningrad society of representatives of their ethnic groups as well as commented on the statistical data on the number of ethnic groups in the region. As a result, expert estimates were obtained which along with the statistical data allowed the author to formulate conclusions on the research subject.

Research methodology

Interviews were conducted following a pre-determined list of questions which included points such as the origin of a particular ethnic group in the region; estimate of the number of an expatriate community today; reasons for a decrease or an increase of an ethnic group; causes of migration in the region; the geography of immigration and emigration flows; the degree of linguistic and cultural assimilation of different generations; the role of national and cultural associations; self-perception of ethnic groups (*yours*, *not yours*); the difficulties and successes of integration into the Kaliningrad society etc. The number of questions varied from 20 to 25. In total, eight interviews were held each lasting between forty minutes and two hours.

Chronological framework

The study focuses on the post-Soviet period; however the starting point of the analysis was the 1989. First of all, the demographic indicators for 1989—1991 are of particular importance since they demonstrate a turning

point in the formation of the population of the Kaliningrad region, the transition from natural increase to natural decline. Secondly, it is possible to draw conclusions about the transformation of the ethnic structure of the region's residents based on a comparison of census data in 1989, 2002 and 2010. Thirdly, the information on migration has been published since 1989, before that migration data were either not published or published in part, irregularly and in quite a generalised manner. All of the above provided the basis for some extension of the time frame of the study.

Changes in the external migration volume and direction of the Kaliningrad region

Changes in the volume and direction of external migrations especially in the first decade of the XXI century had a significant impact on the Kaliningrad region's population growth. Based on the official statistics, three stages of formation of the population of the region in the post-Soviet period can be identified. Stage 1 (1992—1999) — Increase in population occurred solely due to migration growth. Stage 2 (2000—2008) — Population decline was due to the fact that the increased rate of natural attrition surpassed the reduced rate of migration growth. Stage 3 (2009—2013) — Population growth was recorded due to a decrease in the rate of natural attrition and an increase in the migration growth index.

Despite the fluctuations in the index, the migration balance of the Kaliningrad region in the post-Soviet period was extremely positive. The most significant immigration flows took place in the 1990s when the numbers of migrants from other regions of Russia and foreign countries were almost the same (table 1). There were several reasons for that. After the collapse of the Soviet Union the Russian and so-called Russian-speaking population started to rapidly outflow from the newly independent states. Military units were disbanded, and military facilities and troops were relocated from the former Soviet republics and the countries of the socialist community. In addition, there was an increase in the number of categories of such migrants as refugees, forcibly displaced persons and migrant workers. The main countries 'supplying' migrants in the Kaliningrad region in the first years after the collapse of the Soviet Union were Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Belarus, Latvia and Lithuania [26, p. 67]. It is in these republics where there was high proportion of the Russian and Russian-speaking population.

By the early 2000s the number of those arrived in the Kaliningrad region from foreign countries decreased significantly (table 1). On the one hand, the migration potential of the Russian and Russian-speaking population in the former Soviet republics diminished; on the other hand, the socio-economic and political factors played a decisive role. For example, the stabilisation of the national economy and a rise in living standards in Belarus and Kazakhstan as well as the EU accession of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. At the present stage Kaliningrad is an attractive region mostly for migrants from neighbouring countries, the bulk of the migrants come from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Ukraine and Armenia [39, p. 76, 108—109]. Migration in the Kaliningrad region from the far-abroad countries and the Baltic States occurs passively and is temporary in nature.

Table 1

Migration interaction of the Kaliningrad region with other regions of Russia and foreign countries (people)

Year	Arrived	Of which		Departed	Of which		Migration gain	Of which	
		from other Russian regions	from foreign countries		to other Russian regions	to foreign countries		with other Russian regions	with foreign countries
1990	34531	17894	16637	21137	13744	7393	13394	4150	9244
1991	32572	16557	16015	19733	12413	7320	12839	4144	8695
1992	31256	12496	18760	14779	8606	6173	16477	3890	12587
1993	27338	11195	16143	16298	10261	6037	11040	934	10106
1994	32262	13199	19063	13883	10149	3734	18379	3050	15329
1995	24796	12049	12747	13767	10044	3723	11029	2005	9024
1996	20759	11158	9601	11436	8246	3190	9323	2912	6411
1997	22997	11624	11373	10022	7186	2836	12975	4438	8537
1998	22202	10553	11649	9252	6496	2756	12950	4057	8893
1999	13804	7309	6495	4167	1098	3069	9637	6211	3426
2000	13337	6684	6653	8236	5953	2283	5101	731	4370
2001	11351	7127	4224	7031	5252	1779	4320	1875	2445
2002	11599	7340	4259	6439	5007	1432	5160	2333	2827
2003	9276	7211	2065	6139	4919	1220	3137	2292	845
2004	9977	5791	2186	5076	4239	837	2901	1552	1349
2005	8329	5281	3048	4904	4151	753	3425	1130	2295
2006	8623	5488	3135	4614	4012	602	4009	1476	2533
2007	8776	5301	3475	4500	4037	463	4276	1264	3012
2008	8194	4650	3544	4472	4048	424	3722	602	3120
2009	7917	4250	3667	4530	4142	388	3387	108	3279
2010	8173	5018	3155	4866	4411	455	3307	607	2700
2011	13641	8119	5522	7213	6754	459	6428	1365	5063
2012	18394	12260	6134	9692	8318	1374*	8702	3942	4760
2013	21155	13383	7772	12179	9881	2298	8976	3502	5474

Sources: compiled by [27—33; 39; 40].

All the main types of migration are recorded in the Kaliningrad region, labour migration, permanent residence and forced migration. A large flow of migrants is coming from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. After working in the region for a long time, some migrant workers take their families and settle here. This increases the number of Central Asian peoples in the region, as most of the migrant workers are ethnic Kyrgyz, Tajiks and Uzbeks. According to the Chairman of the Kaliningrad region's Tajik culture public organisation K. K. Rasulov, 'as early as five years ago here was an active arrival from the Republic of Tajikistan for construction work... Now people from Uzbekistan come more actively... But migrant workers are still here. They leave, come to work... People change, and the figure has remained more or less constant' [18].

Over the last few years such a group of migrants can be distinguished as members of the State Program for Assisting Compatriots Residing Abroad in Their Voluntary Resettlement in the Russian Federation (hereinafter the State Program)¹. From 2007 to 2010, the Kaliningrad region was a leader in the number of immigrants (since 2011 the region gave place to the Kaluga and Lipetsk regions). By the beginning of 2013 the Kaliningrad region had the highest number of participants of the State Programme, 16.0 % of the total number of those migrated to Russia (see table 2).

To date, immigrants under the State Programme constitute a significant proportion of the total number of migrants entering the Kaliningrad region and play a decisive role in the migration of the population growth (see table 2). The greatest number came from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Armenia and Ukraine [41].

Table 2

**Number of participants in the state programme
(including members of their families)**

Indicator	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Migrants, total as of 1 January 2013
Russian Federation, persons	682	8279	7357	11768	29641	56647	114374
Kaliningrad region, persons	413	3717	2304	2684	3622	5513	18253
Share of the arrived participants in the state programme of the total number of those arrived in the region, %	4.7	45.6	29.5	25.4	26.7	30.1	28.2
Share of participants of the state programme in the region's total mi- gration gain, %	9.7	99.9	68.0	81.2	56.3	63.4	61.2

Sources: compiled by [36; 38; 39; 41].

¹ By the decree of the Government of the Russian Federation dated 10 May 2007, the Kaliningrad region is among the constituent territories of the Russian Federation participating in the State Programme.

Particular attention should be paid to the multiethnic composition of migrants. The reasons for the participation of people of different nationalities in the State Program were expressed by Chairman of the Armenian National and Cultural Autonomy F. T. Gevorgyan, 'Because by inertia we (at least my generation) also consider ourselves Russian-speaking and compatriots. Because within the USSR we had a single family of peoples and a single mentality was formed' [22].

The Kaliningrad region also had such a category as forced migrants (refugees and internally displaced persons)². The greatest number of forced migrants in the region was recorded in the 1990s peaking in 1993 (3,868 persons) and 1994 (5,968 persons). At the beginning of 1998 the number of forced migrants reached 11,361 in the region. Those were mainly people from Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan [14, p. 12; 26, p. 69—70]. Refugees so remember about the circumstances which forced them to leave their homes:

Maybe there would not be so many Tajiks if not military action in the territory of Tajikistan. I lost my wife during the Civil War. When it concerned my son, and he nearly died, I made a firm decision to leave. There was a wave of migration just at that time. Then a few places were determined where it was possible to move, the regions of Belgorod, Kaliningrad, Tver, Smolensk... I had to drop everything in Tajikistan [18].

'The Great Migration of Armenians in the Kaliningrad region started after 1988, after the terrible earthquake. A lot of people came here from Armenia... In the nineties, during the conflicts in Nagorno-Karabakh and Baku, settlers from Azerbaijan began to come here. <...> Economic factors pushed people outside Armenia. There was no water, light, food supply disruptions, and some schools stopped to work. That was an unbearable life. Many of those who had friends, relatives or friends in Russia first of all moved here [22].

In the 2000s the number of forced migrants registered in the Kaliningrad region decreased significantly. There were 296 such people by the beginning of 2013 [36, p. 166; 37, p. 157; 39, p. 130].

Over the past two and a half decades the structure of departures for the Kaliningrad region has changed too (see table 1). Typically departures were caused by circumstances of a personal nature, family and domestic issues, studies or new place of work. The ethnic migration associated with the return to historical homeland became a common thing. Reverse migration also takes place, i. e. people coming to the Kaliningrad region return to their former places of residence. Most migrants left for other regions of Russia. Emigration abroad had its own specificity. In the 1990s it was of the large-scale but wave-like nature (see table 1). The greatest number of emigrants from Russia were among the Russians, Belarusians and Ukrainians (they left mainly to Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine) and the Germans (they only emigrated to Germany) [27, p. 76—79]. Since the beginning of the 2000s the number of those traveling abroad decreased (see table 1). In 2012—2013 the rate of departures increased dramatically. That might be due to the

² Registration of IDPs in Russia has been performed since 1 July 1992, registration of refugees since 20 March 1993

retirement of migrant workers. An indirect confirmation is the fact that the number of those who left for Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in 2012 significantly exceeds the number of people who left for those countries in previous years [27, p. 78, 81; 30, p. 526—527; 31, p. 474—475; 39, p. 110—111]. The greatest number of annual departures to far-abroad countries accounts for Germany.

Representatives of different ethnic groups emigrate from Russia. For example, the Germans, Jews and Poles emigrate under the auspices of the return to their historic homeland. In particular, the director of the non-profit organisation 'Development of the Jewish Culture in the Kaliningrad Region', S. L. Sterlin said:

The Jews do not emigrate. The Jews leave for their homeland in Israel... The main directions except Israel are Germany and America. They go to New Zealand, Canada and Australia. First priority is given to repatriation to Israel. Repatriation is to carry out obligations to your people and your country [20].

Chairman of the Polish National and Cultural Autonomy 'Polonia' EA Rogachikova expressed the following opinion:

Basically people settle in Poland... There are families who have already left Poland for the United States or Canada. But those are single cases. Quite a few move to Germany. <...> It would be wrong to say that the Poles move only to the West. Of course, the movement to the East (i.e. Russia) is not massive. Of course, that is a 'small stream' compared to the 'large water flow' to the West. But there is a reverse movement too. This is an indication that not everything can be measured by material values [17].

It should be noted that emigration to Belarus and Ukraine is not only associated by representatives of the Belarusian and Ukrainian national and cultural associations with the process of returning to their historical homeland. Chairman of the Ukrainian National and Cultural Autonomy A. P. Kostyuk stressed in an interview:

There is no such a principle, I am leaving because I am Ukrainian and should live in the Ukraine. People live where they currently feel in demand or relevant. It is not simply about returning [15].

A similar trend was noted by the Head of the Kaliningrad Department of the Embassy of the Republic of Belarus in the Russian Federation P. Gorbatenko:

No mass exodus of the Belarusians from Russia can be recorded, everything is within the household migration... There are many of those who wish to move from the country. They are not in demand here, and in Belarus including the provision of housing to agricultural professionals. Some move with their entire families... Now a lot of young people go to study in Belarus... Thus, there is no ethnic migration but the migration of interest [16].

Representatives of other nationalities actively travel abroad (for permanent residence, studying and working). For example, the chairman of the Centre for the Chechen and Ingush culture 'Vainakh' R. Kh. Khatsiev noted as follows:

A lot of people moved to Europe... The Chechens live well in Europe, and they are not infringed. They successfully integrate [19].

Chairman of the Kaliningrad region's Roma NGO 'Trayo' ES Leonova stressed:

Lots of the Lithuanian Roma Catholics left for abroad. Many live in the UK... We had people who had previously lived in Lithuania with the Lithuanian citizenship. So, they went to Lithuania and spread further to Europe... Many Roma have now left for Germany [21].

Thus, in the post-Soviet period, the large-scale foreign migration had a great impact on the change in the size and composition of the Kaliningrad region's population. Reasons for migration to the region are largely dependent on the category of migrants. For migrant workers the demand in the labour market and the possibility of earning more than at home are of paramount importance. The State Programme participants are eligible for monetary compensation, and there is a simplified procedure citizenship registration. The wide range of migrants are offered the region's recreational opportunities and business development prospects (the Baltic Sea and proximity to Europe) and the tolerant attitude to visitors. A certain group of migrants consider the Kaliningrad region as a 'transit point' in the future migratory movements to the West. People's active moving to the region enhances migration networks and thus creates a new basis for future migration.

Transformation of the multiethnic structure of the population of the Kaliningrad region and the role of migration

The multiethnic population structure of the region was formed in the Soviet period. According to the 1989 census (table 3), the Russians, Belarusians, Ukrainians and Lithuanians have the highest share in the composition of the residents. The ethnic groups accounted for 96.3 % of the total population of the region. Accordingly, the proportion of other ethnic groups was 3.7%. Despite its small proportion in the population, representatives of many nationalities lived in the Kaliningrad region. For example, the share of the Poles, Tatars, Mordovians, Jews and Chuvash was quite significant (table 3).

In the post-Soviet period of time. The population structure of the region has undergone some changes. First of all, the number and proportion of the Russians increased (table 3), mainly due to migration. According to the 1989 census, the Russians accounted for 78.5% of the population, other ethnic groups for 21.5%; and according to the results of the 2010 Census, 82 and 18% respectively. Many respondents noted that the increase in the Russians occurred due to migration and as a result of assimilation of other ethnic groups, and the increased number of inter-ethnic marriages the children from which favoured the Russian nationality and identified themselves as Russian.

Table 3

Ethnic structure of the Kaliningrad region's population according to the on census data (persons)

Nationality	1989	2002	2010
<i>Total</i>	<i>871159</i>	<i>955281</i>	<i>941873</i>
Azerbaijanis	1881	2959	3282
Armenians	1620	8415	9226
Belarusians	73926	50748	32497
Georgians	523	681	578
Jews	3200	1599	1123
Ingush	102	213	172
Kazakhs	522	631	748
Koreans	153	651	731
Latvians	978	709	516
Lithuanians	18116	13937	9769
Moldovans	1342	1116	1045
Mordvinians	3482	2320	1600
Germans	1307	8340	7349
Poles	4287	3918	2788
Russians	683563	786885	772534
Tajiks	158	309	515
Tatars	3556	4729	4534
Uzbeks	519	631	2245
Ukrainians	62750	47229	32771
Roma	1223	1447	1251
Chechens	278	738	655
Chuvash	2671	2027	1384
Estonians	399	282	185
Turkmens	63	84	107
Kirghiz	105	109	482
Nationality not specified	98	8859	48021

Sources: compiled by [23—25].

Representatives of the 'Kaliningrad foreign community of Belarusians' explained the situation as follows:

The people live in Russia, connect their future with Russia, and therefore call themselves Russian. In the census, many think as follows, I grew up in this country and will be Russian. In Kaliningrad Belarusians so joke about themselves, a Belarusian is a normal Russian [16].

The opinion of the Chairman of the Ukrainian National and Cultural Autonomy, 'I know a lot of people who have the Ukrainian surnames, and they are Ukrainians according to the passport but they consider themselves to be one hundred percent Russian' [15]. A representative of the Jewish Diaspora succinctly put it like this, 'It is easier to live referring yourself to the titular ethnic group' [20].

It should be noted that a reduction in the number and proportion of the Kaliningrad region's traditionally large ethnic communities (Belorussians, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Jews, Mordovians, Poles and Chuvash) is also associated with the reduced fertility and migration out of the region. In parallel, in the post-Soviet period there was a growth of such minorities in the traditionally small ethnic groups like Azeris, Armenians, Kyrgyz, Koreans, Tajiks, Uzbeks and Chechens (see table 3). And in the interview a decisive role of migration in the increase in the number of these people was emphasized [18; 19; 22]. Although, according to official statistics, the share of each of these ethnic groups in the region's population is below 1 %.

Due attention should be paid to the increase in the number of people that did not indicate their nationality. If, during the 1989 census, only 0.01 % of the Kaliningrad region's population failed to indicate their ethnicity, in 2002 0.9 %, and in 2010 5.1 % (see table 3). In that case, the pattern is similar with the Russian national figures, in 1989 Russian census 0.01 % of participants did not indicate their ethnic origin, in 2002 1 %, in 2010 3.9 % [23; 24, p. 50—51; 25, p. 59—61]. It is obvious that the issue of the ethnic composition of the population can not be called simple because it is associated with self-identification of people and their willingness (or unwillingness) to indicate ethnicity. For some people living in a different ethnic, linguistic and cultural environment the issue of ethnic identity causes suspicion and suggests possible discrimination. In such cases, a person either ignores the issue, or indicates another ethnic background. For example, such cases are quite common among migrant workers:

Not everyone wants to talk about his/her ethnic origin. There are people who fear that they will be persecuted. For example, a Tajik, a citizen of Tajikistan fails to obtain the migration registration or the migration registration is expired. And such a person is concerned that he/she may be deported [18].

Many Jews do not want to disclose their ethnicity:

The Jews already genetically, on a subconscious level, have a fear... When I was receiving my first passport, so I wrote Russian under 'nationality'. Many people do not want to expose themselves [20].

Has the ethnic composition of migrants changed? In 1997, a positive balance of migration was recorded for all the ethnic groups with the exception of Jews and Lithuanians. The largest contribution to the migration growth of the Kaliningrad region's population was made by the Russians (74 %), Ukrainians (10.9 %) and Armenians (4.5 %) [26, p. 65—66]. Practically the same setup was recorded in 1999 [27, p. 76—79]. In 2005, the situation changed, quite a high proportion of migrants (28.2 %) failed to indicate their ethnic origin [34, p. 44—49]. That was an indirect proof of their pretty variegated ethnic composition. To date, it is complicated to analyse the ethnic structure of migrants, since 2008 no data on the ethnic composition of migrants have been published³.

³ Since 2008 in the statistical accounting sheets of arrivals and departures there has been no question about the nationality of migrants.

It is very important how the local population perceives migrants because it affects the attitude of migrants towards their place of residence. It should be emphasised that all the respondents had pointed to the tolerance of the Kaliningrad region's population and therefore the region's attractiveness for people with different ethnic background, 'People are more calm and relaxed, and there is no inter-ethnic tension... No one can say to each other, 'You are clogging up the country' because everyone is 'clogging up' here... People come here not to conflict but to live and earn' [19]; 'In Kaliningrad, all people are not local, all are newcomers... Maybe that is why people are tolerant to each other' [21]. 'Many Armenians had the opportunity to move to other regions of Russia. But the people chose the Kaliningrad as the most tolerant region' [22].

As we can see, the multiethnic structure of the region's population evolved in the post-Soviet period, and migration played the crucial role in that.

Conclusion

Migration plays an important role in society and becomes a serious challenge both for the migrants and the host society. On the one hand, migrants need to adapt to different national, cultural and linguistic environment, as well as look for ways to successfully integrate into the host society. On the other hand, the recipient company also undergoes major transformation; there is a change in the number and composition of the population, certain elements are appearing in the culture and codes of contact, new moods are turning up and so on. In this context, there is a need to develop different mechanisms (legal, economic and social) in order to include migrants in the host society and contribute to their further socialisation. In parallel a certain attitude towards migrants is formed in the host society. They are perceived (at least, by a certain group of the population) *non-strangers* or *strangers*. It can have a significant impact on the formation of a unified society. The problem becomes particularly acute when it comes to the creation and development of a polyethnic society like Kaliningrad today.

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About the author

Dr *Elena Zimovina*, Senior Specialist, Social Sciences and Humanities Park, Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University, Kaliningrad, Russia.

E-mail: zimelena@yandex.ru